(d) what steps have been taken to investigate the bungling?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (d) The DPEA liability of M/s. Merind as well as M/s: Cadila in respect of bulk drug Dexamethasone has been worked out for the entire period of the Durg (Prices Control) Order, 1979. Both these cases are presently before the Drug Prices Liabilitites Review Committee (DPLRC) headed by a retired High Court Judge.

पर्यावरण आयोग की स्थापना

347. **श्री अजीत जोगी:** क्या पर्यावरण और वन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार पर्यावरण से संबंधित मामलों को निपटाने के लिए राष्ट्रीय और राज्य स्तर पर पर्यावरण आयोग स्थापित करने का विचार रखती है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ग) इस संबंध में अंतिम निर्णय कब तक ले लिए जाने की संभावना है?

पर्यावरण और वन मंत्री (प्रो॰ सैफउद्दीन सोज़): (क) जी, नहीं।

(ख) और (ग) प्रश्न नहीं उठते।

Destruction of Forests in the North East

348. SHRI ONWARD L. NONGTDU: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the wanton destruction of forests in the North East due to Jhumming shifting cultivation and for the purpose of domestic fuel;

(b) if so, what are the steps taken to stop this practice;

(c) whether Government are aware of the ban on movement of timbers from the North Eastern Region for Industrial purposes; and

(d) if so, what are the steps taken to engage those labourers who were thrown out of jobs due to closure of saw mills and plywood factories in the Region?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Central Government have launched Watershed Development Project for shifting cultivation areas of North-East Region with 100% grant in the State Plan Programmes during last three years of the Eight Five year Plan. An amount of Rs. 45.80 crores has been released by Central Government in the Eight Five Year Plan. The Scheme is continuing during the Ninth Five Year Plan.

(c) Supreme Court *vide* Order dated 12.12.1996 imposed a complete ban on movement of cut trees and timber from any of the seven North-Eastern States except movement of certified timber required for defence or other Government purposes. The Court *vide* Order dated 4.3.1997 constituted a High Power Committee to oversee the strict and faithful implementation of the Order and to oversee preparation of inventories of all timbers lying in North-Eastern States and, *vide* further Order dated 8.5.1997, authorised High Power Committee for permitting sale of round timber within the States for conversion into finished products as well as movement of finished products within and outside the States.

(d) Supreme Court *vide* Order dated 12.12.1996 directed that due to closure of Saw Mills and other Woodbased Industries pursuant to its order, the workers employed will continue to be paid their full emoluments due and shall not be retrenched or removed from services.